



Status of the Black Bear, (*Ursus americanus*) In Northwestern Michigan A Non-Invasive Study



Research performed by Little River Band of Ottawa Indians in conjunction with the Central Michigan University.

What

A research study intended to estimate the black bear population of several counties in Northwestern Michigan.

When The Sampling Will Occur

- The sampling will occur during spring and summer of 2005 and 2006.
- Hair snares will be set up mid-spring (April/May) and removed late August through early September.

Study Area

Includes 9 counties in Northwest Michigan: Benzie, Grand Traverse, Lake, Leelanau, Manistee, Mason, Newaygo, Osceola, and Wexford

Why

- To provide data on black bear populations essential for scientifically based management decisions.
- To determine the degree of genetic diversity in black bears of Northwestern Michigan.
- To determine parental contribution to the black bear population.
- To determine black bear core areas and habitat preferences.

How

- Hair snares will be used to collect samples of black bear hair. The hair snares are non-invasive and not harmful to the black bears. The hair snares will be constructed by wrapping barbed wire (at heights of 20 inches and 8 inches from the ground) around three trees, forming a triangle with approximately 10 feet per side. Fluorescent tagging and cautionary signs will be posted on and next to the hair snare to warn of the presence of barbed wire.
- Bait will be hung from the trees to entice black bears into entering the hair snare.
- Black bears will rub against the barb, leaving a small sample of hair (and DNA).
- Once collected, genetic analysis will be performed on the hair, and this data will be used to estimate the black bear population in Northwestern Michigan.
- A researcher will be at the snare about once per week to check on the hair snare and collect any hair samples left behind.

